

APPENDIX A

MUTUAL SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION.

a. TACFIRE can process information and keep files for two artillery units and all associated subscribers. Therefore, two units can support one another during normal computer displacement or a total TACFIRE computer failure.

b. With the addition of TACFIRE and the BCS to the J-series TOE, FA units have an inherent responsibility to plan for and perform MSU computer backup. A major consideration is the proper use of available communications assets to facilitate MSU operations.

c. The following discussion highlights mutual support considerations that are unique to a battalion. In the TACFIRE enclosure to the FA support plan, the div arty commander specifies the mutual support relationships of each organic and/or attached battalion. Positioning and tactical missions impact heavily on mutual support capabilities. Therefore, the force artillery headquarters should establish mutual support relationships on a case-by-case basis. The relationships should be based on FA organization for combat, positioning requirements, and other considerations as they apply.

2. DS BATTALION. Because of the command relationships and the digital communications requirements, the preferred mutual support unit for a DS battalion is a division GS battalion or a corps artillery reinforcing or GS battalion. The least preferred MSU for a DS battalion is another DS battalion. Because of the limited number of digital data terminals, DS battalions in mutual support of each other are limited to four internal digital fire nets. Therefore, a DS battalion must double up battalion task forces on a single fire net during MSU operations. Supporting two maneuver brigades puts a heavy load on a limited communications capability. The divisional GS battalion can support the subscribers of a DS battalion as well as a corps artillery battalion.

3. LIAISON OFFICERS. When a mutual support computer takes control of the subscribers of a displacing battalion, the displacing battalion commander in effect delegates operational control of his unit to the mutual support unit. To better provide continuity, the displacing commander can elect to send the S3 or one of his assistants to the MSU operations until the displacing computer once again takes control of its own subscribers.

4. COMMUNICATIONS. (See Figure A-1.)

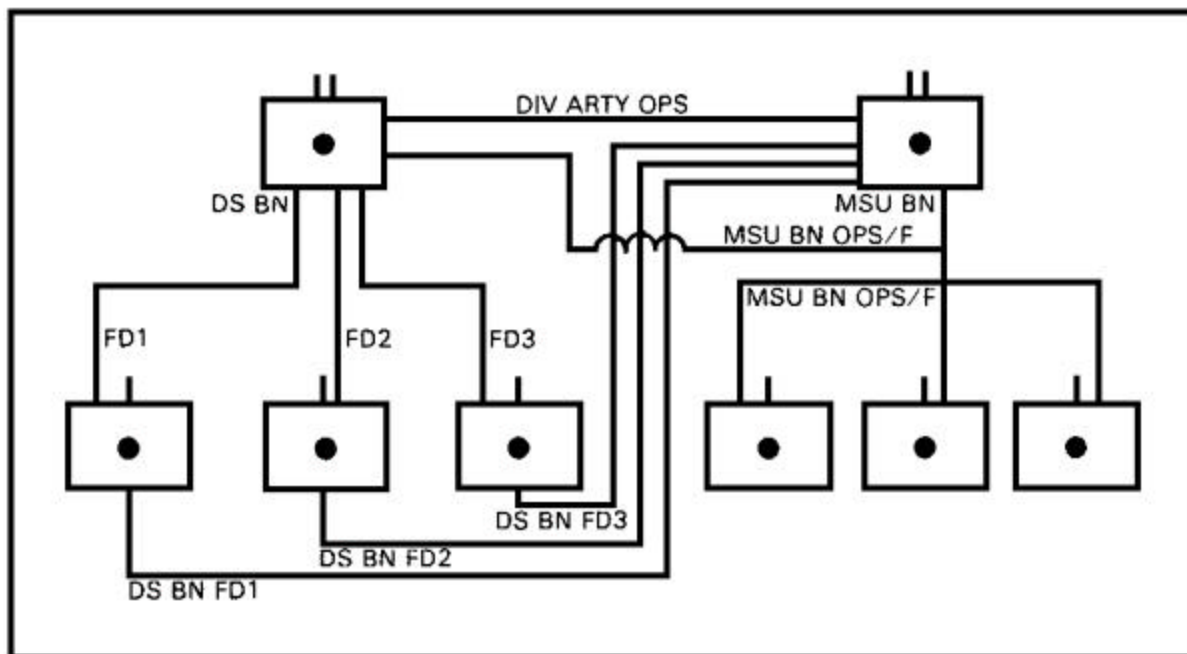


Figure A-1. Mutual support communications structure .

a. Direct support battalion. The following radio nets are used to facilitate transfer of control between MSU units:

- Div arty operations net (FM-digital). The DS battalion and its MSU will operate in the same div arty operations net.
- MSU battalion operations/fire direction net (FM-digital). The DS battalion uses this net when controlling the MSU subscribers.

b. General support battalion. The GS battalion uses the following radio nets to facilitate transfer of control during MSU operations.

- Div arty operations net (FM-digital).
- DS battalion fire direction nets F1, F2, and F3 (FM-digital). When the GS battalion assumes control of the DS battalion firing batteries, it assumes control of its fire direction nets.
- GS battalion operations/fire direction net (FM-digital). This net is the preferred net for the computer-to-computer continuity link between the two units.